



**2023 WINTER HOLIDAY SEASON DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER  
ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN  
SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]**

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***'Tis the Season to Drive Sober:  
Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over***

**Sturgeon, MO** – It's hard to have a happy holiday when you're arrested for drunk driving. Keep the season merry and bright by following the law and refusing to drink and drive. During this busy winter holiday season, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is teaming up with Sturgeon Police Department to urge drivers to think twice before drinking and driving. NHTSA and Sturgeon Police Department want all drivers to remember this lifesaving message: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*. Drivers will see officers working on a special high-visibility enforcement campaign to spread the message about the dangers of drunk driving from December 15, 2023, through January 1, 2024.

Tragically, December can be a dangerous time for people on the roads. During the 2017-2021 December months, there were more than 4,500 people killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. In December 2021 alone, 1,013 people died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. Male drivers are far more likely to be impacted by drunk driving: In December 2021, drunk male drivers were involved in fatal crashes at a much higher rate (721) compared to female drivers (208), male drivers were almost four times more likely (721) to be alcohol-impaired and involved in a fatal traffic crash than females (208) in December 2021. More parties and festivities celebrating the season brings out more drunk drivers. NHTSA and Sturgeon Police Department urge drivers to always make a plan before heading out to a celebration.

"Drunk driving isn't just dangerous, it's illegal," said Sgt Crawford, Thomas. "Drivers have a choice to make: Follow the law and respect their fellow drivers by refraining from drunk driving. Or, make the choice to drive drunk, put others at risk, and risk your own mortality and wellbeing. We need a commitment from every driver to keep the roads free of drunk drivers so that everyone can have a safe holiday," he said.

According to NHTSA, 13,384 fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2021 involved alcohol-impaired drivers. This represented 31% of all traffic fatalities in the United States for the year, and a 14.2% increase from 2020. In December 2021 alone, 1,013 people died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes.

Sturgeon Police Department and NHTSA are reminding citizens of the many resources available to get them home safely. "Drunk driving is not acceptable behavior," said Sgt. Crawford, Thomas. "It is essential to plan a sober ride home before you ever leave for the



party. There are too many resources to get you home safely. There are just no excuses for drunk driving,” he said.

There are plenty of options to help impaired drivers get home safely, such as designating a sober driver or calling a taxi or rideshare. If you see a drunk driver on the road, do not hesitate to contact Sturgeon Police Department.

Remember: a few dollars spent on a ride is a lot cheaper than a DUI, which can cost up to \$10,000. Something else to consider: Don’t ever be too proud or embarrassed to ask for a ride. Allowing a sober driver to help you get home safely keeps you and others safe. What’s more embarrassing than drunkenly asking for a sober ride home? Spending the night in jail. Having your car impounded. Losing your job or your security clearance. Take your pick.

No one should mix drinking and driving, and no one is immune to the effects of drunk driving. If you find yourself drunk and stranded with your vehicle, give your keys to a sober driver who can safely drive you home. Remind your friends to never get in the vehicle with a drunk driver. If you have a friend who is about to drive drunk, take away their keys and help them get home safely. Don’t worry about offending someone – they’ll thank you later. Always have a plan before you head out for the evening. If you wait until after you’ve been drinking to figure out how to get from one place to the next, you will already be too impaired to make the right choices.

For more information about the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* enforcement period, visit [www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving](http://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving).